



Romans 3:9-31

Right With God By Faith in Jesus | March 2nd - 8th, 2014

Warm-up: What do people in our culture *generally* believe about the nature of humanity? Do they think that people are *basically good*? What examples (from the media or from personal experience) inform your opinion?

- Briefly look back over **Romans 3:9-20**. This is Paul's closing argument on sin. No one is capable of doing anything of his or her own accord to become righteous before a holy God. Put this passage in context.
 - What two groups did Paul just get done addressing in Ch's 1 and 2?
 - Why does this section drive it all home?

- How would you describe the clear biblical position that we are all "born in sin," to someone outside the faith? (See **Isaiah 53:6; 64:6, Jeremiah 17:9, Psalm 51:5, Romans 3:10-18, Ephesians 2:1-3**)
 - In your understanding, what does it mean to say that - outside of Christ - we all are "*totally depraved*."
 - Why might this be an offensive teaching to our culture at large?
 - Is the doctrine of total depravity an important one? Why?

- **Proverbs 14:12** says, "There is a path before each person that seems right, but it ends in death." Relate this verse to Jesus' words in **Matthew 7:13-14**.
 - How do these verses instruct or challenge you personally?
 - What do these passages tell us about human nature?

- Sociologist, Christian Smith, says that the true religion of most people in the West today, regardless of whatever religion they profess, is **Moralistic Therapeutic Deism**. In other words, we are good individuals (moralistic) who can get better (therapeutic), though we shouldn't rely upon God for any help. If anything, He is a distant observer who may occasionally respond to an earnest plea for help (deism).
 - Do you see this mindset in our culture? How so?
 - How does the biblical view of humanity - being valuably made in God's image, yet broken from the Fall - differ from Moralistic Therapeutic Deism of our day? (See: **Isa. 53:6, Rom. 7:24-25a, Matt. 10:29-31**)

Wrap-up: Only when we see our condition for what it is, repent and turn to Jesus, can we come to appreciate God's grace, forgiveness and new life. Pray for those in your lives who desperately need to fall upon God's grace!